



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS RECOGNIZES SHERIFF'S  
DEPUTIES AND FIREFIGHTERS WHO TEAMED  
TO SAVE MOTHER AND SON IN COMPTON BLAZE**

**LOS ANGELES --** Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today honored Sheriff's deputies from the Compton station and firefighters from Engine Company 31 for saving the lives of a mother and her son after fire engulfed their home.

The deputies were on routine patrol at about 3 a.m. on Dec. 13, 2009, when they noticed the house fire in an unincorporated area of Compton. A frantic Guillermo Zuniga informed the deputies that his wife, Elva, was trapped in a rear bedroom of the home.

Because of metal security bars, the windows and doors to the residence in the East Rancho Dominguez area were inaccessible. The deputies, assisted by County firefighters who were already on the scene, quickly jumped into action.

"Deputies used a pick to remove the security bars and break (a) window as firefighters reached the room," according to a report by Sheriff's Capt. Diane Walker. The firefighters rescued Mrs. Zuniga and her 14-year-old son Emilio, who were both unconscious.

“With quick and motivated response time, the Sheriff's Department went above and beyond their call of duty to assist the Los Angeles County Fire Department with the rescue,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “Because of their courageous acts, the residents survived and were able to celebrate the holidays with grateful hearts and minds.”

Elva Zuniga, along with her daughter, Priscilla, and nephew, also named Guillermo Zuniga, attended today's meeting of the Board of Supervisors to express the family's appreciation to the deputies and firefighters. Their son, Emilio, remains hospitalized as a result of his injuries.

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#### **LASD/FIRE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION**

##### **Assigned to Engine Co. 31:**

Captain Scott Edwards  
Firefighter Specialist Jeff Audet  
Firefighter Derek Moree  
Firefighter Paramedic Scott Crosby

##### **ALSO HONORED:**

Firefighter Paramedic Jeffrey Brinkman  
Firefighter Paramedic Jeffrey Skogen

##### **Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**

Captain Diane E. Walker  
Lt. Tony Lucia  
Deputy Dru Strong  
Sergeant Ulysses Cruz  
Deputy Michael Kurinij  
Deputy Miguel Balderrama  
Deputy DeJay Barber  
Deputy Paul Carmona  
Deputy Irma Rayas